

BEACHCOMBER

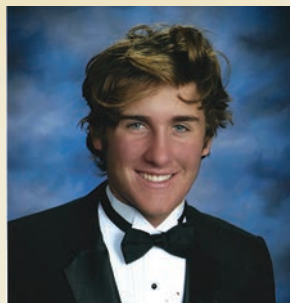
SINCE 1946



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2022



Anna Rauh graduated from Marin Country Day School in June. She is headed to the Bay School in San Francisco this fall.



Austin Moore graduated from Tamalpais High School on June 9, 2022. He will be attending Cal Poly San Luis Obispo this fall.



Class of 2019/22, Maya singing in the rain



Class of 2022, Oscar sizing things up

Maya and **Oscar** both graduated this summer, Oscar from High School and Maya from College.

The month of June brought Covid to Prom at many Bay Area schools. We were grateful that Oscar recovered in time to attend Graduation with his Class of 2022. We celebrated at Marin Academy under hot and hazy skies, breathing in the youthful energy of the students and feeling their optimism for the future.

A week later, we visited Reed in Portland Oregon for Maya's Graduation. Her Class of 2019 had waited for their in-person Ceremony due to Covid, so everyone was very happy to come together and laugh and sing in the rain. Each Ceremony was an opportunity to smile on the inside and also see other faces smiling back.

Our children grew up in Muir Beach and both will now be heading East. Maya already lives in New York, while Oscar will be at Northeastern in Boston. We hope they'll visit us when the yearning for heavy fog, free food and clean laundry become too great to resist.

Congratulations to all of our Muir Beach families and their Graduates!

—Sarah Nesbitt

This is Saviour

By Nina Vincent

In June I was invited to accompany Cassidy Friedman and Amber Allen Peirson to Nairobi Kenya where they would be making a documentary film about Harambee Arts with its founders Gloria Simoneaux and Kenya resident Lillian Obonyo. This is one of several stories about the children of the program who now, fifteen years later, are helping to run the program. Harambee Arts empowers kids and helps them see their own potential. I am forever changed because of these young people and their courage, determination, and beauty.



Saviour

This is Saviour Juma. He is nineteen years old and lives with his mother and four siblings in Kibera, one of the largest slums in the world. Saviour's family struggled on a regular basis for food, education and shelter. Many nights of his childhood he went to bed hungry and lived with the winter rains coming through the holes in the roof of his home.



Sun Valley Arts Collective youth hoping for peaceful elections in August.

Continued on next page

Saviour *continued*

The volume of Saviour's smile fills rooms and the soft whisper of his voice beckons us to lean in closer, "These problems sharpened my mind. The memories of each and every suffering keep ringing in my mind and that keeps me working hard in order to help my family." At seven years old Saviour started fetching water for his neighbors in order to earn money to help his family survive.

"When I was a little boy, I used to draw everywhere, in my books, on my mom's table or with a stick in the ground. I came to realize that I don't have a loud voice, so I chose art to tell my stories and share my message." Saviour began painting in earnest by the age of eleven when he was also introduced by one of his mentors to Harambee Arts where he was hired as a junior staff member and thus earned a stipend which he also used to support his family. These days the money Saviour earns from his work with Harambee Arts and the sale of his art goes towards helping his single mother pay for food, rent and the school fees for his siblings.



The 'road' to Saviour's home.



Portrait on corrugated tin by Saviour Juma

During the pandemic, in 2020, Saviour created "Sun Valley," an art collective that empowers and educates young people in the Kibera community. The collective is made up of fifteen teenage boys from Kibera who share their skills with one another and who mentor dozens of children from Kibera between the ages of five and twelve. Saviour believes that, "Art talks. Through art you can spread any message. It allows everyone to have their own style and express their individuality." The collective hopes to, "Empower the needy through the use of art."

These days the message Saviour wants to impart to the world comes through his use of recycled materials. His art is inspired by his immediate environment, and he hopes to bring awareness to the need we have to care for our environment.

Visit the Art Collective

<https://www.instagram.com/artsunvalley/>

and see what resilience, determination, and vision look like from Saviour's perspective.



Social justice mural Sun Valley Collective – Kibera

The **Beachcomber**, our neighborhood news, is published quarterly by and for residents, friends, family and former residents of Muir Beach. Published since 1946 (on and off), circulation 170 (more or less).

Contribute your essays, poems, stories, photographs, artwork, announcements, reviews – anything that celebrates Muir Beach and our community. Everything printed should be considered solely the opinion of the writer and printed in the form and condition as submitted. Beachcomber exercises no editorial control over content except for readability and general appearance.

Email: Submissions, request to subscribe or questions to: editor@muirbeachcomber.com

Mail: *Beachcomber*, 14 Starbuck Dr. Muir Beach, CA 94965

Visit: muirbeachcomber.com

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Circulation/Finance: Beth Begault

Website: Julie Smith

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ON THE COVER

View from Heather Cutoff Trail

Photograph

Nikola Tede

And what a day it was! Nikola caught this aerial view of the wonderful Muir Beach community event when heading home, up the switchbacks, on Heather Cutoff trail.

“Walking uphill is much easier when music and great barbecue smells fill the air. Thank you MBVFA.” *Nikola*



MUIR BEACH CARING

415 320-MUIR (6847)

muirbeachcaring@gmail.com

It's not too late to join our Volunteer Team

9th year! Founded by the Elderberries, Muir Beach Caring is simply a list of community residents who volunteer to provide various forms of help, assistance, and support to neighbors in times of short-term need.

The most common needs of community members have been;

- rides to and from medical appointments
- dropping off a meal
- accompaniment for walking post surgery
- help with errands such as groceries-picking up medicine from pharmacy
- brief home visits
- and/or any other small supports for those in need – even sending flowers or a card.
- Muir Beach Caring does not provide any emergency services, direct care-giving or child care, housekeeping, or gardening.

In all these ways neighbors can ease the challenges during times of difficulty and build even stronger relationships within our beloved community. Supporting others is like entering a beautiful circle of giver-receiver-and gift, and everyone feels better for it.

If you wish to be on the email list to be notified about requests as they arise, please email muirbeachcaring@gmail.com

For those wishing assistance from Muir Beach Caring you may call 415-320-MUIR (6847) between 9am - 6pm or email muirbeachcaring@gmail.com anytime.

You will receive a response from the coordinator as quickly as possible usually within 24-72 hours.

You do not need to be a current volunteer to receive assistance.

For medical or other emergencies please call 911.

Muir Beach Caring is not equipped to handle medical or other emergency situations.

The Magic of Ocean Riders

Tucked away on the coast between the Marin Headlands and Muir Woods lies The Golden Gate Dairy Stables – and the home of Ocean Riders. I discovered this magical place last fall, when my friend moved her Icelandic horse into the stable. We had been riding for years at other barns, but the Dairy captured our hearts instantly. I had dreamed of having my own horse forever, and suddenly I knew this was exactly what I had been waiting for. A few months later, my heart horse became available, and I moved him into the stable.

Everything here feels like a throwback to a simpler time, when horses roamed the hillsides. The barn and outbuildings are warm and welcoming, with plenty of spots to tuck in and forget the real world. The fog rolling in damps out the traffic and bustle of Mill Valley, just over the ridge.

The rustic, windswept hay barn is the centerpiece of the property, a structure that dates from the late 1800s when this was a working dairy. Still referred to as “The Dairy,” Ocean Riders partners with the National Park Service and Green Gulch Farm, a Zen community just beyond the beach. We have a symbiotic relationship with Green Gulch, renting pasture space where horses can live and play together. Horse manure is transported daily to Green Gulch compost piles, where it’s transformed into ‘black gold’ that supports their organic gardens.

Our community at the barn is wonderful – easygoing, knowledgeable people who are always willing to lend a hand and help in any way. As a first-time horse owner, I am learning every day, and this support makes it so much easier. Everyone looks out for each other, and all the horses are part of the family. The town of Muir Beach feels like this too – a row of colorful mailboxes along the road invites a daily stream of locals who all feel like old friends.

The stable is also home to a diverse family of creatures and it’s always alive with natural activity. Deer with new fawns often wander through the paddock area. Bobcats, coyotes and bunnies are regular visitors. Birds of all kinds sing and soar overhead. Barn swallows flit in and out of the hay barn, bright and fast.

Trail access from the barn is extraordinary – we can explore everything from Muir Woods and Mount Tam to the coastal headlands and beyond. Riding out through Green Gulch Farm, we pass rows of organic



wildflowers, kale, cabbage, zucchini and greens galore. Breathing in the Zen vibe, we start to relax into each moment. Passing through a sweet apple orchard, we zigzag up into a towering eucalyptus grove with soft sunlight sparkling through the branches overhead. My horse lets out a deep, fluttering exhale – telling me, “Yeah, I feel better now.” Me too!

– Mary Howard

This is from Mary Howard who joined our organization last year as a sponsor and now owns her own horse. She’s so grateful to have found us so has written about it for the Beachcomber. – Maureen Pinto, Photo by Jess Pinto

THANK YOU MAURY

Since he raised his hand during Anne Jeschke’s ‘2013 Save the *Beachcomber*’ meeting, Maury has volunteered to take on the finances, website, fundraising, and circulation for the *Beachcomber*. This year, Maury has decided to retire from his *Beachcomber* duties and we have recruited Beth Begault and Julie Smith to fill his volunteer efforts. Beth will manage *Beachcomber* finances, fundraising and circulation, while Julie Smith keeps the website up to date.

The *Beachcomber* team and our wonderful community of contributors and readers has been extremely fortunate to have had Maury’s contributions to our neighborhood news.

Thanks so much Maury, your commitment, diligence, and humor will always be remembered and appreciated.

– Kate and Janet

Water Ways in Muir Beach

By Beth Begault

Here we all are in year 3 of a major drought, and the best science warns us that familiar weather cycles of the past are changing and that we need to adapt. Shorter showers and minimal outdoor watering will help significantly as Muir Beach heads into another dry autumn, but there's also some fun to be had in learning new skills: how to re-use water from our indoor plumbing and rooftops.



Happy plant in the Lasky yard, passively watered nearly year round with a rain chain.

Photo by Melissa Lasky

Save money and save the salmon!

A little sleuthing has turned up some on-point water re-use in the neighborhood, ranging from the simple (hello, bucket in the shower) to the full Rube Goldberg at Joseph Ferraro's on Starbuck. What are we missing? If you're re-using water, please send a photo for the next issue!



Begault shower bucket in the act of collecting water for the indoor/outdoor plants while the shower warms. Melissa Lasky estimated that her small bucket produces 1500 gallons of water per year for their garden.

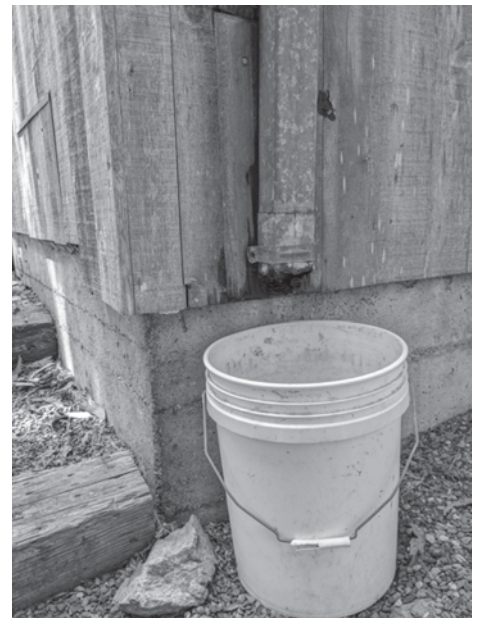
Photo by Beth Begault

For rain water/ gray water catchment supplies:

+Urban Farmer Store,
653 East Blithedale, Mill Valley or
2121 San Joaquin St., Richmond

+Friedman's Home Improvement,
429 N. McDowell, Petaluma

+Fairfax Lumber and Hardware,
109 Broadway, Fairfax



Simplicity itself in the yard of Ernst Karel and Helen Mirra: a 5-gallon bucket that collects non-potable roof runoff for re-use in their garden.

Photo by Ernst Karel

For more ideas and information:

- +<https://www.marinwater.org/NoWaterWasted> (includes local rebates and incentives)
- +Sarah Phillips, Urban Streams Program Manager out of Pt Reyes Station (sarah@marinrcd.org)
- +book rec by Sarah: *Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands and Beyond* by Brad Lancaster
- +Check out Ernst Karel's recurring Water Element articles in the Beachcomber, particularly his recounting in the November 2021 issue of the salmon crisis last fall in Redwood Creek

Many thanks to Sarah Phillips, Joseph Ferraro, Ernst Karel, and Melissa Lasky.



Sarah Phillips, Urban Streams Program Manager and rainwater harvesting specialist extraordinaire, doing what she does so well: helping us learn to make the most of the water we have in Marin. Slow it, Spread it, Sink it, Store it!
Photo by Gerhard Epke of Friends of Corte Madera Creek



Here we have the A-team of water catchment: Joseph Ferraro with one of his two 500-gallon rain barrels that re-uses water from the indoor plumbing (gray water, using only biodegradable soaps in the household) and from two sections of rooftop (rain catchment). The two systems provide all the water he and Nikola need for their fruit orchard and vegetable garden. Joseph noted that he can collect hundreds of gallons of water, from a single 1" storm, by diverting the water from a small section of roof. He maximizes the water pressure by connecting a larger pipe to a smaller pipe and by using gravity (even a 1/8" slope is enough to create gravity drainage).
Photo by Beth Begault



Olive barrel from Italy becomes rain barrel in Muir Beach for passive watering. One hopes.
A 100-gallon barrel collects over 800 pounds of water, so needs to be placed with care. This 56-gallon paintable barrel is \$16.99 at Friedman's in Petaluma. Connection parts add up to more than that. Science project!
Photo by Beth Begault

Muir Beach Holiday Arts Fair

Saturday, December 3, 10am-5pm

Maybe: Sunday, December 4, 10am-4pm

By Laurie Piel

The 2022 Muir Beach Holiday Arts Fair is on the books! We've already had inquiries from some of last year's artists about participating again and since last year was a great success...we're on!

The return of the BBQ was a big hit, and now with our new MBCC Rental Coordinator, Joani Marinoff, the Center is coming back to life as well. We're looking to the December Holiday Arts Fair to be an event we can all share...and yes, we will still have food as well as the beverage bar... and hopefully our musicians will sign up again.

Like last year the plans remain: all artists and attendees will all have to show proof of vaccination and masks are requested indoors.

We would like input on whether or not we want to go back to a two day event (as we've done in the past) or stay with only one day as we did last year. Also, we would love some input as to whether or not we keep it residents only for artists (as we did last year) or open it up to others. Lastly, we'd like input about letting the outside world know the fair is on this year. So, to tell me your opinion on resident artists, publicity or not, one day or two or if you are

interested in performing, please drop me an email at muirbeachartsfair@gmail.com.

Here are the particulars for our Holiday Arts Fair 2022:

DATES:

Set Up: Fri., Dec. 2nd

Fair: Sat., Dec. 3rd (10-5)

And maybe: Sun., Dec. 4th
(10 - 4 - and then Load Out)

ENTRANTS: As of now: Open only to Muir Beachers. Family members will be considered residents.

ENTRANCE RULES: The work must be your creation. You do not have to manufacture it yourself. For example, if you make a piece of pottery, you do not have to fire it yourself. You can use found objects in your art and can design the sweater but do not have to knit it yourself. This is a curated event.

COST: TBD/TABLE. Based on schedule. Two people can share a table if they don't think they have enough items to sell on their own.

SALES: Each artist is responsible for their own means of getting paid.

REGISTRATION: Information will be available once some decisions are made.

MB ORGANIZATIONS: The organizations that support MB such as the MBVFA, The Quilters and the Garden Club have their fee waived although they are asked to please register.

So let us know your feelings about having the 2022 MB Holiday Arts by emailing muirbeachartsfair@gmail.com.

See you all at the Fair! *Laurie*

The Best of Times

Lyrics by David Leivick

The days go by so slowly
The years go by so fast
The pain hangs on forever
The pleasure never lasts

The rich man dies in splendor
The poor man dies in debt
The old man can't remember.
The young man can't forget

It's the best of times
It's the worst of times
It's the time we call our own
It's the best of times
It's the worst of times
And it's no time...
To be alone

Farmers dream of sailing
Sailors dream of land
You and I we dream of love
And try to understand

Summer ends in harvest
Winter ends in spring
Childhood ends with a broken heart
And the yearning that it brings

It's the best of times
It's the worst of time
It's the time we call our own
It's the best of times
It's the worst of times
And it's no time...
To be alone

The storm line stretches eastward
The western sky is clear
Yesterday is fading fast
Tomorrow's drawing near

There's no time like the present
Though I'm not sure what that means
On our way to somewhere
We're always in between

It's the best of times
It's the worst of times
It's the time we call our own
It's the best of times
It's the worst of times
And it's no time...
To be alone

Centering the Community:

MB Community Center Update

By Joani Marinoff, MBCC Rental Coordinator

As many of you know the Community Center opened again to all rentals in April as Covid restrictions eased. I have been happy to come onboard as the new Rental Coordinator and play a part in making this beautiful venue available to all. We have been busy updating all the rental information documents and trying our best to recruit and train new facilitators for events.

So far this year the Community Center has hosted a Paul Smith Concert, the Celebration of Kathy Sward, the Summer Solstice Celebration, and the monthly meetings of the Quilters, the Elderberries, and Firewise and Disaster Council.

Sadly, we do not currently have a cohort of facilitators to continue rentals using the facilitator model for all events.

So, for now, if we do not have a facilitator available, all new rentals will be on a pause as we assess what comes next. I will be working with Muir Beach District Manager, Mary Halley, and Laurie Piel, the first facilitator, on the development of a revised set of guidelines for resident rentals without a facilitator as our priority. Moving forward please bear with us as we figure out a new system to maintain the Community Center as the lovely place that it is and keep it available to residents while meeting the needs of surrounding neighbors.

Amid these changes, I was very interested to hear a bit of the history of events and the use of a facilitator at the Community Center. Laurie and Mary have filled me in, and I'll share some of it with you now.

Years ago, there was no real structure to the rental process. Basically, the renters were given the door code and were told: "try not to burn the place down and lockup when you leave." Community events such as Tai Chi, Bistro, CSD & Fire Department meetings, the MB Holiday Fair, and the annual Day of the Dead celebration made up the majority of the Center's use. There were occasional birthday parties, meetings, and other celebrations and a New Year's Eve party or two, but basically it wasn't being utilized.

Once the community started coming to the Center for music events, its attributes became obvious



and it became the place to have a local event be it a birthday party, office gathering, community dinner, book exchange, wedding or bon voyage. We even had a Beachcomber fundraiser and a celebration of U.S. citizenship. With the growing proliferation of social media, people "found" the MBCC and use of the center rose, especially for "over the hill" rentals.

As is often the case, rules develop to address problems that arise. With more and more rentals for both residents and non-residents it became clear that there had to be some structure in place for rentals. We needed some rules and, importantly, someone to be present at events to both orient folks to the quirks of the center and to see that the rules were followed, particularly related to parking and noise levels. And so, the position of facilitator was born.

Here is what Laurie has said about being a facilitator, "I was lucky because I was there at the onset of the program. The opportunity to meet so many community members was spectacular. I had more fun than I had ever expected. Occasionally, I got to explore my creative side as I worked with the celebrants to make the Center fulfill their dreams. I was there during the creation of people's vision of their special day and often ended up feeling like a true part of the event. Plus, I always got to eat the catered food! What could be bad? LOL!"

We are still actively recruiting folks who might be interested in becoming an event facilitator even as we develop an updated rental policy. Anyone interested in becoming a facilitator can contact me and I'd be delighted to chat, provide all the details, answer your questions, and bring you on board.

Being a Facilitator remains a great way to get involved in the life of the community plus earn a little cash.

My contact is muirbeachcc@gmail.com. We hope to hear from you.

The Critter Report: Muir Beach Underground

By Dave MacKenzie

Many Muir Beachers explore the paths, trails, and other byways in our area, while enjoying the natural features. But do you ever ponder that there is an underground world of paths, trails, tunnels and pockets under our feet as we walk?

Back in the Jurassic or so (let's say almost 200 million years ago), some early land mammals trying to find plants to eat evolved a bias toward surface foraging at night, mostly due to predators trying to eat these mammals: reptiles, dinosaurs, birds, and other mammals. So the underground world was created; providing safety and food.

Of course, our local gophers (Botta's Pocket Gopher: *Thomomys bottae*) did not invent life underground. That had been done a long time before by worms, beetles, millipedes and other beasties. And by plants, which evolved many strategies for using the minerals and the fungi in the soil for nutrition. But the gophers and other critters then learned to eat the plants, or their roots, in underground tunnels. At night, above ground foraging is OK, but tunneling is a safer bet during the day. One gopher can have tunnels hundreds of yards long, and down to 6 feet deep.

Even though most home gardeners (and commercial ones, for that matter), hate the marauding gopher passionately, these animals are pretty good at avoiding traps and other methods for killing them. Maybe we should show them more respect for their amazing lifestyle. Recently studies have suggested that gophers are essentially farmers: they trim plant roots underground in their tunnels, and when the roots regrow,

the tender shoots are consumed, accounting for a significant percentage of the gopher's calories. Maybe not good for your beet garden, but great for the gophers!

Another critter which lives in the Muir Beach Underground is the Broad-footed Mole (*Scapanus latimanus*). These are smaller cousins of the gophers, but in this case they are the predators! They would not attack the much larger gopher, but instead feast on worms, insects, mollusks, and other small critters found underground. The moles have their own tunnel systems, and are rarely seen above ground. The only ones I have come across on the surface are already dead for some reason.

We also have lots of Voles (*Microtus californicus*), which are tunnelers, but just barely. Voles look like chubby mice with short tails. Sometimes they are happy with tunnels underneath grass cuttings, or other wood or plant material, but usually just on the surface of the soil. Voles spend a lot more time foraging (for plants) above ground during the day, but they can move really fast into adjacent cover if a Bobcat or Red-Shouldered Hawk shows up.

And then there is the ultimate underground predator: the Long-Tailed Weasel (*Neogale freneta*). These are seen occasionally in Muir Beach as they sometimes hunt above ground, but where they really spend most of their time is hunting for gophers in their underground tunnels. What a surprise it is to see a weasel pop up out of a gopher hole to give you a quick look! With the black tail-tip and the white face



Broad-footed Mole



Vole



Long-Tailed Weasel

mask on their sleek, golden bodies, these are surely one of the best looking animals in Muir Beach.

So there we have it: a complex underground world beneath our feet. My dream is to get a Lidar scanner (used to find underground pipes, among other things) and make a complete 3-D map of gopher, mole, and whatever tunnels are under the grassy area at the Muir Beach Overlook. What a system it must be!

Where do we live?

Helen Mirra

The Point Reyes Light newspaper arrives by post for subscribers every week. Wisely they publish a two-week calendar, because it usually arrives just about half-way through the current listings. Therein we found out about an event held on the last Saturday in July among the hay bales at Toby's. It was a celebration for Malcolm Margolin's latest book: *Deep Hanging Out: Wanderings and Wonderment in Native California* (Heyday).

* There were four speakers, all California Native cultural leaders. One was Theresa Harlan (Tewa/Santo Domingo Pueblo & adopted Coast Miwok). Within a larger commitment to Indigenous ways, her own focus is to "protect, restore & repatriate the ancestral homelands" of Felix Cove on Tomales Bay. She spoke movingly about the importance of returning to the use of Native names for places that were settled, so late in deep history, by Europeans. This is one of the main projects of the California Institute for Community, Art & Nature, as they describe it in their newsletter: "The Spaniards' first act of cultural conquest was to replace Native names with European ones, erasing Native history from the California landscape. In a major initiative, we're working with The Nature Conservancy and other university, state, and tribal partners to restore Native names to the landscape and to present an Indigenous perspective on our land through contemporary mapmaking. Our goals are both to honor California's Native peoples and to cultivate a broader sense of connection to place. We believe that knowing one's place in the world and feeling connected to it are critical to a healthy and sustainable society.... Our ultimate plans call for a statewide atlas of Indigenous California names. This project is especially timely given the national reckoning on monuments and names." I see this as tied to Steven Moss's valuable piece in the May *Beachcomber* about reparations, and the idea that Spindrift, among other Nature Conservancy 'properties', should be under tribal stewardship. Might we directly recognize and support the reality that this place, recently known as "Muir Beach", has a much deeper living history? May this community live up to the radicality of the very word *community* and change the name of where we live, ever so temporarily, by consulting with Native folks about what would be most appropriate, whether that might be "Big Lagoon" or something else? Whether setting a precedent or following a regional trend, a wholesome renaming could be transformational.

* I had the chance to converse with Malcolm before the event. He has a kind, gentle, and inquisitive presence. Though he was having a difficulty finding words and speaks very quietly, and while it was a noisy environment and I have hearing problems in such an environment, nonetheless we connected. When I mentioned living in 'Muir Beach', he replied that he had often visited Mary and John Collier here. As *culturally* observant Jews, we shared a laugh when I asked if Mary and John's son Malcolm was named after him – a nice coincidence, but luckily no. (If you don't know why we'd smile about this, ask a Jewish friend.)

48TH ANNUAL MUIR BEACH FIREMEN'S BBQ

After a two-year pandemic hiatus, the **48th Annual Muir Beach Volunteer Firemen's Barbecue** took place on Memorial Day weekend, **Sunday, May 29**, and was a big success, not only as a fundraiser but as a community-building endeavor! The Muir Beach community rallied together to prepare all aspects of the daylong event. The weeks leading up to the Barbecue saw neighbors helping where and when they could. Whether it was power washing the barbecue grounds, ordering porta potties, baking desserts, gathering raffle prizes, buying supplies, or volunteering the day of, Muir Beachers stepped up to help out. We raised nearly \$50,000 for the MBVFD, making it one of the top-grossing Barbecues in recent history.

Prices from many of our vendors had gone up since the last Barbecue and, in some cases, quite dramatically. By securing several donations and sponsorships, we were able to cut costs to help make this year's barbecue one for the ages!

There are several people to thank and hopefully, I won't miss any. First off, we'd like to thank all the firefighters on the MBVFD under the direction of **Chief Chris Gove**. The MBVFA Board: **Frank Schoenfeld** (treasurer and MVP), **Brenda Kohn**, **Nina Vincent** (ad hoc volunteer coordinator), **Lisa Eigsti** (merchandise goddess), **Ellen Littwiller** (bean and barbecue sauce queen), and **Deb Ketchum** and **Michael Kaufman**. A special shout out to sponsors **Recology** for providing all the garbage and recycling receptacles for the afternoon; **Lagunitas** for donating

all of the delicious craft beer; **Greg Kidd** who covered the cost of all the chicken; **Gabe Leis** and **Joe's Taco Lounge** for providing burritos for the Saturday work parties and salsa for the veggie meals; **Ball Company** for donating 1,800 100% recyclable beer cups, and the dozens of businesses that donated to the raffle.

A tremendous thank you to all of the volunteers and to the various committee heads: **Deb Allen** for an absolutely amazing raffle this year; **Jesse Rudnick**, **Frank Piazza** and **Graham Groneman** for running the beer booth; **Sarah Nesbitt** overseeing wine; chicken guys **Jesse De Voss**, **Matt Silva** and **Steve Shaffer**; **Tayeko Kaufman** for coordinating the desserts (and all of the amazing bakers!); crepes by **Annabelle and Sophie Conti**; **Joey Groneman** and her wonderful decorations; **Barbara Piotter** with the veggie meals, **David Taylor** in the first aid tent; **Laura Van Amburgh** and all of the kitchen helpers; **Andre Pessis** for coordinating all of the music and the awesome bands **Andre and the All Stars** and **Wreckless Strangers**, **Victoria Hamilton-Rivers** for helping with non alcoholic drinks, **Julie Smith/paparazzi**, **Renee**

Boeche for taking over security check points, **David and Laurie Brandt** and **Steve and Kate Somers** for collecting money from walk-in this year, which helped bring in an additional \$2,000; **Brad Eigsti** for his tremendous effort making all of the hand-made signs; **Brett Sibley** for kicking butt on ordering supplies, **Paul Brannan** for running tickets, **Jon Rauh** our favorite portapotties man, **Don Piotter** and the spirited garbage crew; **Chris Gove** who lead the way bringing Toon Town and the BBQ grounds back to life after two years; **David Piel** and **Peter Evans** in parking; **Sonja and Shawn Roberts** for helping with the first work party lunch, **Deborah McDonald** for organizing the Sunday volunteer breakfast, Kids Coral coordinator **Becca Vershbow**, charcoal guy **Aran Moore** and all the former committee heads who guided and trained the new ones to help make for a smooth transition. **Cuco and Consuela Alcala** and a generous Muir Beach benefactor for providing tacos for the Saturday night work party.

We will be back in 2023 and you can contact me for volunteer and sponsorship opportunities: denise@deniselamottpr.com
Come and join the fun!





*Muir Beach Volunteer Firemen's BBQ Sunday, May 29, 2022.
Photos by Denise Lamott, Aran Moore and Kirstie Martinelli*

Muir Beach Evacuation Drill 2022

The first major community emergency preparedness event since the pandemic was the Muir Beach Evacuation Drill that began Saturday, June 11, 2022 at 9am.



(Above) The Muir Beach Disaster Council members at the drill: left, Janice Kubota, Vanessa Phillips, Robin Terra, Chris Gove (fire chief), Alexis Chase, Danny Hobson, Liz Salin, Susannah Kennedy, Barbara Piotter and Denise Lamott; (below) The Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department: Robert Allen, Annabelle Conti, Maurice Conti, David Taylor, Brad Eigsti, Austin Moore and (last on right) Sandor Hatvany; Marin County Fire: Richard Wonneberger, fire captain and colleagues



Photography by Denise Lamott, Danny Hobson, Tom Jordan and Robin Terra

Neighborhood liaisons were out on their sections of the street in their CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) vests.

Fire engines and sheriff's cars parked at the end of Sunset, Pacific and at the Overlook ready to cruise with the high/low signal broadcasting the drill announcement. At 9:00, the Office of Emergency Services sent out the alert via text, mobile and landline voicemail and we all moved into action.

All along the streets, "Evacuated" tags were nailed, pinned or hung onto fences within view of the street.

Traffic proceeded in a smooth and orderly manner. There were no logjams. We made our way in our cars, with pets in carriers or on the passenger seats and prepacked emergency go-bag, to Santos Meadow. This had been chosen as a good gathering point because it is a large parking area, it had been recently mowed for the BBQ, and it is out of the way of tourists coming to the main beach.

Fire engines and first responder teams from Muir Beach, Marin County Fire, the National Park Service and the Marin Sheriff's office lent the drill an appreciated sense of weightiness and professionalism.

At the picnic grounds stage,

- **Fire Chief Chris Gove** welcomed everyone and spoke about our community fire safety.
- **Firewise lead Don Piotter** gave an informative talk about Firewise as an effort of neighbors helping neighbors reduce their fire risk by making our properties more fire safe. **Firewise member Klaus Poppensieler** handed out detailed Firewise brochures.
- **Elaine Wilkinson, Marin County Emergency Preparedness Coordinator**, spoke next with good information and a rapport with the children reminding us of the

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Neighborhood liaisons

Muir Beach is divided up into 15 smaller 'neighborhoods', and each of these has a liaison who is a member of the larger Disaster Council. We meet monthly and conduct radio drills so that in the absence of cell phone coverage communication can continue. Liaisons are in contact with residents within their area, ideally to get to know them so that in the event of a real emergency, we can react efficiently. This includes knowing what pets live in homes and whether there are any special needs that residents may want to share.

(Top)
Elaine Wilkinson, Marin County Emergency Preparedness Coordinator with Muir Beach Fire Chief, Chris Gove and Muir Beach residents at the drill; Tom Jordan, Office of Emergency Services, Marin County Sheriff's Department; Don Piotter, Firewise Muir Beach lead; Marin County fire department broadcasting the evacuation drill on Sunset Way





(Above) Muir Beachers gather for the evacuation drill at Santos Meadow. (Left) Evacuation tags allow first responders to triage their personnel and taskforce, to know which houses are empty and don't need attention from a search-and-rescue team.

Alert Marin is run by the Marin Office of Emergency Services. As opposed to *Nixle*, which is targeted to zipcode, *AlertMarin* can be targeted to specific addresses and is used for information in a local event. In this case, they targeted the announcement to Muir Beach addresses. If you have not signed up, please do so. Alerts are available via text, email and telephone call. You choose. No personal information is sold for marketing. This is an official local emergency service. www.alertmarin.org.

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importance of a personal disaster preparedness plan for ourselves and our roommates and/or family. This means making arrangements in advance to ask for help for elderly, disabled, children or pets. She and colleague **Leah Curtis** distributed new useful printed materials and small flashlights.

▪ **Tom Jordan, Office of Emergency Services, Marin County Sheriff's Department**, answered questions and gave useful information on the kinds of evacuations relevant to Muir Beach. For example: future *AlertMarin* messages in the event of a real fire would include instructions for residents on where they should go during an evacuation (ie. towards the north and Stinson Beach, towards the south and Mill Valley, or to the beach).

In the end, there were about 40 cars at Santos Meadow. About 25 percent of Muir Beach participated actively and another 20 percent showed their support by displaying 'evacuated tags'. That was a great turnout considering many residents were already traveling for summer holidays.

Thank you for the generous support with fire trucks and personnel from the **Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department, Marin County Fire**, the **National Park Service**, and the **Marin County Sheriff's Office**.

What's next?

The Muir Beach Disaster Council will reconvene monthly starting in September. We'll have new radios, which will work better in our unique terrain. We have a number of new liaisons and a feeling of optimism about what is needed to pull Muir Beach together as a community in the event of any kind of emergency event. Please get to know your neighborhood liaison. The Muir Beach Disaster Council liaison list is on the MBVFD website and reach out to any of us if you have questions or would like to join us.

Co-leaders

Robin Terra and Susannah Kennedy

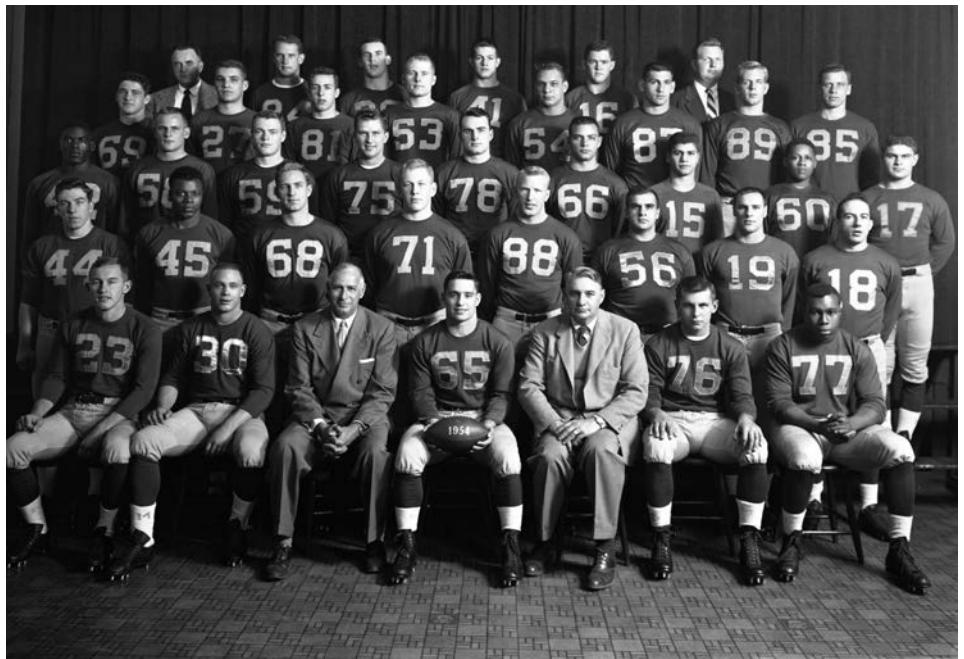
One gets to know Muir Beach in fits and starts. There is a mention of "cow hill" overheard in a conversation, or a nostalgic chuckle about the famous barbecue that draws all of Marin, or the "were you here?" shudder on the Slide Ranch fire. Local references remain obscure for a while to everyone. But for those of us arriving just before or during the pandemic, it has taken an extra two years to begin to piece the community puzzle together. Through former lead, Kasey Corbit, I got to know about the Disaster Council, which seemed like a gloomy name at first. Disaster? Why tempt fate? But little by little, I have begun to understand that this little free-spirited hamlet on the sea is ready for everything, and has been built on generations of volunteers who envisioned what we needed in good times and in bad. With co-leader Robin's guidance, I've very gradually tiptoed into understanding the variety of residents, the needs and the hurdles. The Disaster Council once focused mainly on earthquake preparedness and mudslide isolation, but wildfire prevention has shifted to the fore. Now we are preparing for earthquake, fire, tsunami and Highway 1 mudslides. Our first major event since the pandemic was the Muir Beach evacuation drill, and it was a resounding success due to the energy of Chris Gove, Robin Terra, the neighborhood liaisons and all the residents who prepared their go-bags and drove to Santos Meadow. Thank you. - *Susannah Kennedy*

Duncan and Evelyn

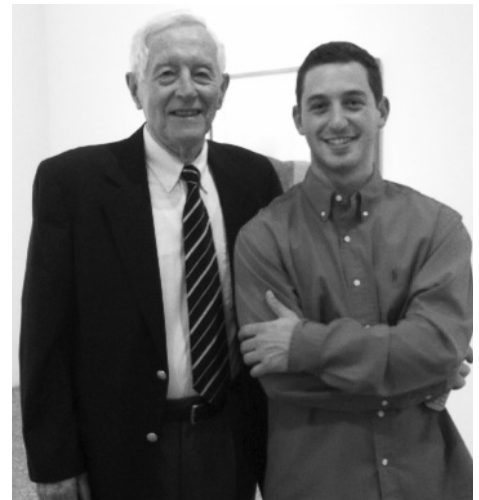
By Ed Hyman

Sadly, this week starting on August 2nd Cameron McDonald-Hyman and his brother Devon McDonald-Hyman are joining with their mom. Deborah has been in northernmost Minnesota with her parents attending for the better part of the last two and a half years to her father's stroke, which left half of his body paralyzed, and has accompanied increasingly intrusive and severe cognitive decline. It's been tough on all of us, but because of Dunc's rapid decline and the guys' demanding schedules, Cam and Dev may be seeing their grandfather for the last time. This will in essence be a "good-bye," as Duncan will not be interacting much any longer.

Many of the Muir Beach community will remember Duncan and Evelyn spending 4-6 months a year with us for the past 35 of the 45 years we've lived here, and attending Bistro and other community events. Evelyn joined Brenda and Deborah for coffee and tea duty during the Holiday Fairs. People will also remember Duncan organizing games for the children at the Community Center during birthdays and other events, and joining with Ev to take care of the boys in their youth when Deb and I were on forensic assignments out of the state, sometimes for several months at a time.



For Duncan and Evelyn, who are now 89 and 90, as for the remainder of the family, this has been a very difficult experience. Even though Deb is a seasoned PhD psychologist, Cam is an MD, PhD HemOnc specialist,



and Ed a clinical neuroscientist of fifty years, these are hard diseases with which to cope for anyone who is close, professional or not.

It is quite difficult to see the rapid and profound decline of anyone, but for us especially, of this outstanding athlete [only man ever to be starting quarterback at the University of

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Michigan for all four years of eligibility], brilliant economist, renowned businessman [executive vice president of one of the world's largest and best known insurance companies], and a conservationist of nearly six decades working to protect his beloved Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, where they retired 39 years ago and have had property on Gunflint Lake [which forms the US-Canadian border] for over a half century.

As Deb and I have rotated in and out of Grand Marais, it has been a constant challenge, emotionally and physically, for us all, and assuredly will be for Cam and Dev as well. As I temporarily hold down the fort here in MB, I want to thank many Muir Beachers who have been a constant and continuing support to Deb and myself, and particularly those who went way out of their way to help including Mike Moore, Lonna, Chris, Bernard, Brenda and Rich. For those of us who want to remember Big Mac's better times, there are many copies of Dunc's outstanding 1951-1954 Michigan games scattered all over the Net.

For those who might remember those teams (e.g. the Smiths), Dunc is number 23 on the 1954 team photo. The lower left photo is Dunc and Ev at Cam's graduation from Carleton College in 2009. The lower right photo is Dunc with Dev on opening night of the presentation accompanying Devon's receipt of the Handtmann Prize.

NEW NAME, NEW GOALS FOR COMMUNITY GROUP

By Anne Jeschke

Elderberries, a social group that has organized community events for over 15 years, is morphing into a new organization with a new name.

Kept by the Covid pandemic from staging events at the Community Center for two years, the group has reassessed its role and has decided to experiment with alternative methods of bringing the community together.

Even the name is changing. Members acknowledged that "Elderberries" created an image of old and elderly which kept many Muir Beachers from participating. Numerous residents have said that the name "Elderberries" discourages them from joining. They don't want to be identified as "old", even though the reality is members are very active and very involved members of the community. The new name, yet to be chosen, should reflect an organization focused on creating new and exciting community events for all age groups.

Under consideration is the purchase of a large screen entertainment system for movie nights featuring local filmmakers, classic films and kids movies. The system could also facilitate community-wide gatherings to watch sporting events like 49er and Warrior games along with championship series and the Superbowl. A reimagined version of the wildly successful community dinner is also being explored.

While a number of new names are under consideration, the group is asking Muir Beach residents to suggest names that better reflect its mission to bring the community together with fun events that appeal to all age groups. The past, however, is not being forgotten. The group plans to build on a plethora of successful events that have included book exchanges, musical programs featuring local musicians, history celebrations like the Muir Beach "Summer of Love," outings to entertainment venues like "Beach Blanket Babylon, and a tour of the Buck Center. Resurrection of a non-partisan candidates' night for CSD nominees is also under consideration. Muir Beach Caring, which has helped numerous residents get to medical appointments and has provided meals to housebound residents, will continue its mission of temporary help to the infirm.

The group formerly known as the Elderberries plans to continue to be a major source of community activities in Muir Beach. We would welcome your thoughts on our current projects – and specifically, ideas for a more inclusive name for the group. Our next meeting will be at the community center on **August 24th at 10 AM**. We'll be serving coffee and tea, along with toast and various spreads to entice you. Come join us!

A Dose of Reality

Having hit age 70+ myself, I've noticed that I have plenty of company in these parts. This includes lots of folks with a decade or more on me who are still climbing the rocks, diving into the ice cold sea, and frolicking with their grandkids. It's downright inspirational as I nurse my various joint aches and other indignities associated with advancing age.

But the enjoyment of our so-called golden years has to be tempered with a dose or two of reality – those spiral staircases aren't meant for all 85 year olds and all 85 year old partners can't carry the proverbial load forever. I am still enjoying a late career denouement in aging policy and I know all of the data all too well – about the daunting demographics, the burgeoning need for supportive services to help people stay in their homes when frailty – either physical or mental or both – hits, and the persistent inadequacies of the health and long-term care system. I have

been involved in efforts in California and elsewhere across the country to develop state Master Plans for Aging, mapping out the gap between the expected demand for such services and the current supply. I was blown away by a recent study projecting a shortage by 2030 of 600,000 home care workers – that's in California alone. And unfortunately, the services that are available are very expensive – especially for older people who do not realize that Medicare – as good as it is – mostly fails to cover long-term care either at home or in a nursing facility.

The good news for those living solely on social security benefits is that they could be eligible for another major publicly financed health and long-term care program called Medicaid nationally and Medi-Cal here in California. Unfortunately, too many people -- including many independent cusses in places like Muir Beach – won't even think about their potential eligibility for Medi-

Cal until their frailty overwhelms them and their families. And in some ways, the inherent generosity of their Muir Beach neighbors – who provide the occasional meal or the ride to the doctor – might seduce them into thinking that they'll be able to handle whatever cards Father Time deals them. But, the hard reality is that the challenges presented by chronic illnesses, frailty and dementia are truly too daunting and just too big to be met solely by the kindness of neighbors.

So, while Muir Beach's kindness of neighbors certainly will persist, I would urge each of us oldsters to get real and develop our own master plans for aging. Sit down at our kitchen tables – alone or better with family members – and collect our vital information – social security card, tax returns, bank accounts, health insurance cards, advance medical directives, etc – and map out a plan for a less independent future. You could be lucky and never need it. But, a dose of reality could come suddenly through a fall or a stroke. Or it could sneak up on us so that we hardly notice our inability to pour that tea or to remember to take that pill. Without a plan for whom to contact to get needed services and -- very importantly -- how to pay for what you may need, you and those who care for you will be at a loss for how to cope. As I write these last lines, it feels like maybe I should sign this "Dr. Doom", but in fact I feel like I might be earning a stripe as a kind Muir Beacher by encouraging my fellow oldsters to rise above the fogs of August and get this stuff clear in their minds and in the minds of their loved ones.

– Steve Somers

Shop Local

Lisa Eigsti and Brenda Kohn are at your service if you'd like to arrange to meet them at the Community Center to pick up some Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department logo gear. Talk about shopping local! And all proceeds go toward keeping our volunteer firefighters well-trained and well-equipped.

Peruse your many options and prices at muirbeachfire.com and contact Lisa (lisaeigsti@gmail.com) or Brenda (brendakohn@aol.com or text (415) 855-5050). Pay by check or on the website (in the Shop section, drop down to the DONATE tab, and add "For Merch" in notes when you pay).



Cruz McMackin, rocking his new MBVFD hat. Photo by Marissa McMackin

Turning of the Seasons

By Mia Monroe

Rain in early August! What a relief to those of us now living in fire country, to those of us nurtured by Redwood Creek and to the redwoods soaking it all in! And it offered a cue to the ladybugs to form clusters now observable along Bootjack Trail and Fern Creek: a true late summer wonderment!

Other bright splashes of red are showing off! Poison oak! red elderberry! Already there are the mellow colors of buckeye leaves soon to drop and make way for the liquid brown “buckeyes”, as well as the yellow-russet maple. A time of harvest, fruit and movement. Hold your breath: early signs point to monarchs in number migrating to coastal sites!

This brings Rachel Carson to mind and how in her last year she came to California and wondered about the monarchs streaming past her Tiburon window. Her one wish was to see the redwoods and rangers proudly still recall her visit to Muir Woods and then to see pelicans at Rodeo Beach. Pelicans: a species pulled back from the brink of pesticide-induced extinction and today abundant yet always awesome. Still among us, like the peregrine falcon and gray whale, the turtles re-establishing as well as the frog and otter! Let’s hope for monarchs to make this recovery too!

Rachel Carson, who’s *Silent Spring* was published 60 years ago, reassures us that “those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is symbolic as well as actual beauty in

the migration of the birds, the ebb and flow of the tides, the folded bud ready for spring.” She did not know that today’s challenge and call to action would be the disruption to the life’s biodiversity and rhythms due to climate change.

So today we wonder about the kelp beds offshore, too much fog or an extended drought and we respond to the urge to take action right here as well as in every sphere of influence we can.

Now, hope you see a monarch or glimpse a sea star again, celebrate migrating hawks and chinook salmon since Rachel Carson also offers them as “something healing in the repeated refrains of nature, the reassurance that dawn comes

after night and spring after winter.” And we can offer them refuge and more!

P.S. Tip of the hat to you all who daily clean the beach!

There’s a BIG coast clean-up day on Sept. 17.

Plus, put Oct. 26 on your calendar for a Sneak Peak Party to Learn about OneTam’s PeakHealth2.0 report and more:

October 27 GGNRA will celebrate 50 years (remember when it was Muir Beach State Beach?)

A huge thank you to my helpers at the MBVFD 2022 BBQ!

I was fortunate to end up with 100 raffle prizes this year and actually sold out of raffle tickets during the event (brought some different colored ones from past years that we used for this emergency and ran out of those, too)! I want to thank my helpers: Robert Allen (selling tickets, getting and delivering raffle prizes), Laurie Piel (selling tickets, with me at the raffle booth), Victoria Hamilton Rivers (handing out prizes to winners with Robert at the raffle booth), David Piel (announcing the raffle prize winners from stage), Jessica Rauh (the runner of winning tickets from the stage to the booth)

and Mabel Taylor (in charge of pulling out the winning tickets from the spinner on stage)! I also want to thank so many MB neighbors who purchased their 25 raffle tickets that I put in local mailboxes and those of you who even purchased more! Almost 3/4 of the winners were locals, which is posted on the FD website, here: <http://muirbeachfire.com/PDF/BBQraffle/MBVFD%202022%20Raffle%20Winners.pdf>. And lastly, I want to thank the neighbors who sent additional \$ donations to the FD.

– Debra Allen

Water Element

By Ernst Karel

We are in what is being called a megadrought, which may last for decades. In July of 2021, Governor Newsom set a state-wide goal of a voluntary 15% reduction in water usage, and a recent article in the Marin IJ looked at usage in June 2022 compared to a baseline of June 2020 (Paul Rogers, ‘California drought: Water conservation increasing statewide’, Marin IJ, August 2, 2022). While usage statewide in March and April actually increased by about 18% compared to 2020, in May statewide usage reduced by 3.1% and in June by 7.6%, again compared to two years earlier. However, closer to home, the Marin Municipal Water District reported a 25.3% reduction compared to 2020, and Muir Beach (which is its own water district) is doing similarly. Comparing June-July 2022 with June-July 2020, we achieved a 30.8% reduction; comparing April-May 2022 with April-May 2020, a 25.8% reduction; comparing February-March 2022 with February-March 2020, an 11.5% reduction. Looking at the year as a whole, District Manager Mary Halley reports that comparing totals for Fiscal Year 2021-22 with those of FY 2020-21, we show a 23.4% decrease (not including the Pelican Inn, which has not been conserving water).

How much water are we using in terms of gallons per day, and how does that compare to local and state trends and guidelines? The state of California has taken small steps to recommend lower individual water usage, moving from a current recommendation of 55 gallons per

person per day to 47 gal/day by 2025, and 42 by 2030. Actual current per capita usage by county varies widely. San Francisco County is at the lowest end, at 41 gallons per capita daily in June 2022 (and consistently at about this level for at least the past eight years), while in Marin people used 76 gallons/day in June 2022, down from 86 in June 2021, 99 in June of 2020, and 110 in June 2019 (according to figures from California Water Boards, waterboards.ca.gov).

But what about Muir Beach in particular? Like the trend in Marin, our community’s water usage has also declined from 2021 and from 2020. Average use per connection in June-July 2022 was 121 gallons per day per connection, compared to 136 gal/day for the same period in 2021. To interpret these figures, note

that while the figures from the Water Boards indicate per capita usage, our figures are per household, and numbers of people per household, and other factors like whether there are full-time residents, obviously vary widely in Muir Beach. (These figures do exclude unused connections like empty lots, and also don’t count the Pelican Inn.)

We can learn more about the overall usage in the community by looking beyond the average usage to a breakdown by percentile, as usage varies quite widely within the community. So, while average MB residential use in June-July 2022 was 121 gallons/day, the median (or 50th percentile) was 94 gal/day, the 90th percentile 230 gal/day, with about a dozen households between that

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	Jan 2022, gal/day	Mar 2022, gal/day	May 2022, gal/day	July 2022, gal/day
10 th percentile	13	25	22	24
20 th percentile	36	44	41	46
30 th percentile	54	58	56	57
40 th percentile	63	74	69	75
median	78	85	81	94
60 th percentile	93	98	102	113
70 th percentile	102	120	115	142
80 th percentile	127	139	145	194
90 th percentile	159	189	217	230
98 th percentile	213	289	343	385
99 th percentile	428	396	581	633
highest user	716	589	1001	758

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90th percentile and the highest user at 758 gal/day, including several at or above the 98th and 99th percentiles. At the other end of the scale, the 10th and 20th percentiles were 24 and 46 gal/day, respectively.

Given that we share our water with myriad other critters living in the Redwood Creek watershed, and that the less we use, the more there is for that ecosystem to thrive, there is of course more each of us can do! At the level of the CSD, we are exploring a project to replace our aging water

meters with smart meters. Other water districts in the Bay Area are making this transition and show immediate gains in water conservation (see Paul Rogers, 'Bay Area water utilities warm to 'smart' meters', Marin IJ, June 16 2022). Smart meters help the community use less water by giving residents ongoing information about their usage patterns and most importantly alert them to potential leaks right away, instead of only with the manual readings every other month. That project may take a while,

but in the meantime, individuals interested in understanding more about their own water usage can also install Flume devices, which just strap onto the existing water meter and relay real-time information to convey the same benefits as smart meters – and many Muir Beach residents have already done so with success (see flumewater.com). And Beth Begault's article in this issue points to the many ways that we can each continue to be mindful of our water use.



40' humpback whale, apparently killed by a ship strike, washed high on the rocks during king tides, between split rock and turtle rock, below the owl trail. *Photo taken by Helen Mirra on July 16.*

Firewise Lead Addresses Evacuation Drill

This article's goal is to complement the evacuation drill by sharing Firewise information about preventing damage to life and property from wildfire.

First: What is Firewise?

Firewise Muir Beach is just one of over 1,000 Firewise neighborhood groups across the country. **The mission of the team is to help Muir Beach residents greatly reduce the ignition potential of their homes.**

The Muir Beach Firewise team's role is:

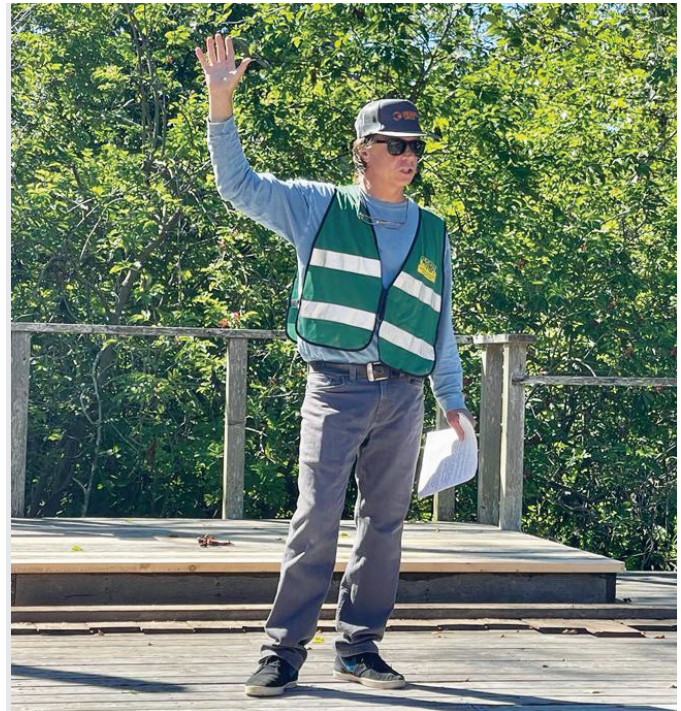
- 1) To be a resource for residents to help them reduce home ignition potential of their homes
- 2) To encourage residents to focus on their own houses, and work outward toward their property lines.
- 3) To do the above in a manner that is supportive, creative, and transparent

You've learned about what the team's role is — here's what **is not** the team's role:

- First, Muir Beach Firewise **is NOT** an enforcement entity. We are not here to pressure, shame, or fine anyone for anything
- Secondly, Muir Beach Firewise does not overlap with or supersede assessments of individual properties conducted by Marin County Fire. They're the ones that come on your property and identify fire safety issues and enforce compliance
- Lastly, Firewise is not responsible for public lands near Muir Beach. Each entity—including NPS and Tamalpais State Park—is responsible for their respective lands, based on inputs from fire authorities. Those entities are taking action to reduce fuel loads on their respective properties. The Muir Beach Fire Department is collaborating extensively with them.

Meet the Firewise Muir Beach team:

Robin Terra and **Klaus Poppensieker** lead the communications efforts. They've put out several



Don Piotter speaking about Firewise Muir Beach efforts at the first Muir Beach Evacuation Drill, Saturday, June 11, 2022 at Santos Meadow.

communications in your mailbox, through email, the Beachcomber, and signage

Ron Rosano has led the efforts to assess wildfire risks in Muir Beach

Rick Bernard and **Joani Marinoff** are the newest valuable team members. They're working on various group and new, evolving projects. We appreciate their flexibility and talents.

Last but not least: **Chris Gove** is the person that pushed to form a Firewise team, and as Fire Chief, provides us ongoing guidance

Now that the Muir Beach Firewise team's objective and role is clear, here are some observations **about fire risk in Muir Beach:**

First - Regardless of rain in winter, and fog in the summer, every year we have days—typically in the fall—when the fire danger is extreme. These are called *red flag days*. It doesn't take much on those days to start a blaze that can get out of control - such as a car with a dragging tailpipe shooting sparks, or car engine fire.

Some recent examples of fires near Muir Beach:

- 1) A few years back, we had a fire just north of us on

Continued on next page

*This speech has been edited to fit content as an article.

Highway 1. It took the Muir Beach firefighters and County fire an incredible amount of energy to stop that blaze from moving toward Muir Beach. Many residents were worried that day about their homes and properties.

2) Another example was an electrical transformer that exploded on Panoramic a few years ago, igniting a brush fire. In different weather conditions, things could have gotten out of hand quickly and threatened Muir Beach. We were lucky that day.

Some additional facts about our local landscape:

- Muir Beach has a lot more vegetation than decades ago. Mature vegetation can fuel a big blaze.
- Climate change makes fire seasons longer, increasing the number of *red flag days*. You've seen and smelled the smoke of nearby fires. Additional red flag days increase our risk proportionally
- Insurance companies are withdrawing from some areas, including Muir Beach. If they don't want the risk, it means the risk has gotten higher.

In addition to the general risk described so far, the team has assessed *specific* risks to Muir Beach based on a community survey conducted walking up and down each of our streets:

- First, many Muir Beach houses can benefit from removing vegetation growing within five feet of their houses. In a wildfire, this leads to house ignition.
- Second, Muir Beach property owners should identify and manage/remove vegetation that's five feet or more from their houses that is overgrown and intersects with one another. This can prevent fire from growing and spreading to neighboring properties.
- Third, houses with decks can improve fire safety by 1) removing flammable materials like lumber and firewood underneath them, and 2) installing ember screening to prevent glowing embers from setting decks afire from underneath.

What's the conclusion? Clearly action is required!

Here are two things we need to do:

- 1) Make our landscapes "Firewise"
- 2) "Harden" your house and outbuildings

Extensive research has proven that properties with Firewise landscapes and hardened structures can survive many types of wildfires. It's false to think that your house will burn regardless of what you do. What you and your neighbor do matters.

Here's research that proves the point:

- *The National Institute of Standards and Technology under the US Department of Commerce* did an extensive study

of neighborhood fire mitigation efforts. They found that individuals that harden their homes and manage their landscapes are likely to survive *fast moving and low to moderate intensity* fires. You've seen the neighborhood photos where a few houses burn while others are spared.

- The same study showed that often none of the houses in a neighborhood can survive *high intensity* fires. You've also seen photos of entire neighborhoods burned to the ground.

But there is a way to survive high intensity fires.

It requires that more than 80% of residents participate in Firewise landscaping and home hardening. This prevents fires from gaining intensity and engulfing entire neighborhoods. Catastrophe can be prevented with our coordinated action.

But, you ask, doesn't prevention cost money?

Yes it does. Firewise landscaping and home hardening are not free but costs are manageable:

- First, focus on changes that are most impactful and least expensive like cutting back vegetation before "chipper days"—this is when the County processes and removes your pruned vegetation for free. Our area's next Chipper Day is the week of 26 September: www.chipperday.com/marin
- Another inexpensive fix is to replace crawl space vents with newer and tighter vents. This prevents hot fire embers from getting sucked into your cool crawl space—a leading cause of structure fires.
- You don't need to do everything, or pay for everything, at once! Pace your projects.
- Last, make Firewise choices when conducting major maintenance. For example, if you need to replace your siding use fire resistant materials. Often the cost and appearance of Firewise materials are about the same as traditional materials.

We're in this together! What we can do for you:

- Help you interpret assessments of your property delivered by County Fire
- Assist you in understanding Firewise landscaping and home hardening principles
- Get you started on a realistic, doable action plan
- Connect you with resources to develop and execute your plans
- Help residents with limited resources or abilities to pursue grant funding

Reach out to any member of the team and they'll help you to be more Firewise.

Welcome Isaac Pearlman



Welcoming Isaac Pearlman

On behalf of the staff and supporters of Marin County's Collaboration: Sea-level Marin Adaptation Response Team (C-SMART), we are pleased to announce that Isaac Pearlman has joined our staff as Manager of the Adaptation and Resilience Collaboration (ARC) for the Stinson Beach area.



Prior to coming to Marin County, Isaac spent two years with BCDC, where he evaluated sea level rise vulnerability and climate policy as part of the Adapting to Rising Tides program. He then was selected as a Fulbright recipient to research coastal flood risk in Panama and just returned from there, having completed his project. Isaac received his bachelor's degree from UC San Diego and a master's from UC Santa Barbara, where he also spent two years as a sustainable fisheries project manager and researcher. A Marin County native, Isaac served in Peace Corps in both Peru and the Philippines. He has also worked as a FEMA floodplain specialist reviewing environmental compliance of post-disaster rebuild projects, and as a Sea Grant Fellow with California State Parks. His articles on climate adaptation have been published in *Sierra Magazine*, *Estuary News*, and *KneeDeep Times*, among other outlets.

One of Isaac's first tasks is bringing the contract for ESA, the consulting firm selected under the grant provided by the Ocean Protection Council, to the Board of Supervisors on July 12. With that, the ARC project will be fully underway; you can expect to hear from us in the coming weeks.

Isaac's email is ipearlman@marincounty.org.

Our ARC team looks forward to working with you!
Jack Liebster
Planning Manager
County of Marin Community Development Agency

GOOD WINE, GOOD SONG & GREAT ENERGY

MBVFA BBQ 2022

Story and photos by Sarah Nesbitt

There are moments in Santos Meadow when the sun and dust dance together above us and form a perfect cloud of music and laughter and it drifts through the air and touches us all. This year, we felt this good energy once again and we thank all the crew on our Wine Booth for creating our MB BBQ '22 ecosystem. From the early shift with Gary who was tireless sampling wines with the persuasive Norbert, to Laura and Lonna with their bright and welcoming morning cheer, to Kathy and her sweet nature and kindness in the middle of the afternoon, to Simon and Vanessa with their passion and local knowledge of wine all day, to the fabulously cool Lotta, Sandor and Nikki, on the wild and wonderful late shift.

We also thank our generous wine donors, including Michael and Jenny Caulfield, Lotta and Sandor Hatvany, Brenda Kohn, Michael and Janet Moore, Thierry Lovato, Kathryn Stebner and Ellen Callaway, Nina Vincent and Laura Pandapas. Norbert, you are our rock, taking excellent care of the inventory and Simon, you are our connoisseur - we could not make so many visitors so jolly without you. We also thank Denise, of course. There is inevitably "something" that needs to be done at the last minute and she (and her family) can be relied upon to make it happen, with a hug or a fist bump and assuredly, with a positive approach.

The list goes on and we appreciate the work teams and carpenters, landscapers and drivers, artists and musicians, merchandise and raffle crew, the beer crew, chefs and kitchen crew, parking and playground crew, tickets, finance and inventory and every dedicated volunteer.

A special mention to Don Piotter for his garbage crew and their optimistic mojo, doing things right, being "green" and having a good time. And Chris. We loved the "Ask Chris" T-shirts and thank him for being our steadfast Muir Beach Fire Chief.

Cheers!

Continued on next page

GOOD WINE

Continued from previous page



Kathy and Sarah mid-afternoon Wine Booth duo “forever”

Decorating the Wine Booth with neighbors big and small (right).



Simon and Vanessa our own passionate wine connoisseurs (below).



Gary, Don and Norbert commit to wine tasting chores

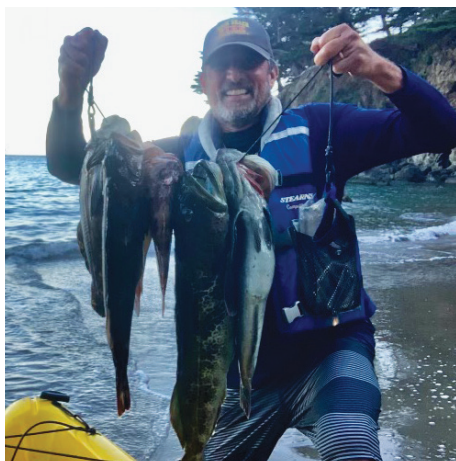


Laura and Norbert prepare for the thirsty masses



Final Orders with Nikki and Lotta and discerning fans

Kayak Fishing



Jeff Swarts and Jon “Fishboy” Rauh got lucky with a catch of rock cod and ling cod off Little Beach in July. Photos taken by Jeff and Jon.

MUIR BEACH FIREMEN'S BBQ 48TH ANNUAL

Photo of Andre, and Crepe booth by Denise Lamott. Other photos by Annelisa MacBean.

